

Japanese American National Museum

369 East First Street

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Title: “Boyle Heights: Neighborhood Sites and Insights”

Partners: The International Institute of Los Angeles
 The Jewish Historical Society of Southern California
 Self-Help Graphics
 Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP GRANTS – MUSEUMS IN THE COMMUNITY

Japanese American National Museum

Abstract

The Japanese American National Museum respectfully requests funds to support “Boyle Heights: Neighborhood Sites and Insights,” a multifaceted and dynamic partnership initiative and collaborative exhibition that explores the history and transformations of a significant Los Angeles neighborhood.

The Japanese American National Museum has been working to become a new kind of museum—one that actively involves the people and communities it serves as equal partners. From its inception the Museum has been, and continues to be community-based—conceived of, strongly supported by, and deeply involved in the diverse Japanese American community. “Boyle Heights: Neighborhood Sites and Insights” extends the partnership model across disciplinary, generational, ethnic, and religious lines. The International Institute of Los Angeles, The Jewish Historical Society of Southern California, Self-Help Graphics, Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School and an advisory group of scholars, community experts, and the Japanese American National Museum are actively collaborating to produce a community-based and interdisciplinary initiative that encompasses new research, an exhibition, and an extensive series of public programs.

Situated just east of Little Tokyo, where the Japanese American National Museum is located, Boyle Heights has long been a gateway for newcomers to the city. From the 1920s to the 1950s it was Los Angeles’ most heterogeneous neighborhood. This project focuses on neighborhood life as a complex whole, rather than on discrete ethnic groups, underscoring multicultural and multigenerational interaction. The unique characteristics of Boyle Heights will be explored through the communities, local organizations, and first-person perspectives of its residents—past and present—with the twofold aim of assessing both local significance and the broader social dynamics and processes of change typical to other American urban communities.

PROJECT GOALS

The goals of the project are to:

- actively initiate collaborations and intercultural exchanges between organizations, scholars, and community members;
- document, interpret, and share the history of the diverse communities in Boyle Heights through the voices and perspectives of those who live/d there;
- facilitate greater understanding of the neighborhood through public programs and exhibitions;
- increase awareness about how the histories of people from different ethnic backgrounds are related in direct and indirect ways;
- engage and challenge a broad spectrum of individuals and organizations to participate in a civic dialogue that connects the stories of past and present neighborhood residents, as well as those of people from different ethnic/racial backgrounds.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

The project components are multifaceted and include: 1) Community Presentations and Forum; 2) Photo Collection Day; 3) Oral History Interviews; 4) Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School Student Research Project; 5) Exhibition with Exhibition Catalogue and Educational Materials/Components; 6) Neighborhood Programs including Public Tour of Evergreen Memorial Park and Neighborhood Displays and Workshops; 7) Lecture Series and Symposium; 8) Traveling Exhibition; 9) Web site.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

This project engages a diverse cross-section of people in the documentation and interpretation of a neighborhood's history. The various programs facilitate opportunities for self- and community reflection, and they will help people to 1) develop historical sensibilities; 2) sharpen their ability to locate themselves in time and place; and 3) enhance their knowledge as historically-informed makers of history.

By working together to develop and implement the project, partners will learn about one another's respective communities. This process will affect, in the long term, how each continues, on the organizational level, to address and make connections with other communities. What's more, the particular skills and expertise that are shared will also enhance the quality of each partner's future programming. Above all, we hope that the partnership experience will promote lasting intercultural relations and linkages between participating organizations and communities.

Institute of Museum and Library Sciences
National Leadership Grant 2000
Museums in the Community

Narrative

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Japanese American National Museum respectfully submits this proposal, “Boyle Heights: Neighborhood Sites and Insights,” for \$50,000 to support a multifaceted partnership initiative and collaborative exhibition that explores the history and transformations of a significant Los Angeles neighborhood. The partnership with the International Institute of Los Angeles, The Jewish Historical Society of Southern California, Self-Help Graphics, Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School and an advisory group of scholars and community experts will produce community-based, interdisciplinary research, an exhibition, and public programs with an estimated total budget of \$314,775.

Situated just east of Little Tokyo, where the Japanese American National Museum is located, Boyle Heights has long been a gateway for newcomers to the city. From the 1920s to the 1950s it was Los Angeles’ most heterogeneous neighborhood, serving as home to large concentrations of Jews, Mexicans, and Japanese Americans, as well as Russian Molokans, African Americans, and people of Armenian, Italian, and Chinese descent. Today the neighborhood is primarily Latino, and it continues to serve as a port-of-entry for a number of the city’s immigrant groups.

This project focuses on neighborhood life as a complex whole, rather than on discrete ethnic groups, underscoring multicultural and multigenerational interaction and exchange. The particular and unique characteristics of Boyle Heights will be explored through the communities, local organizations, and first-person perspectives of its residents—past and present—with the twofold aim of assessing both local significance and the broader social dynamics and processes of change typical to other American urban communities.

This project will use a variety of accessible formats to record, interpret, and disseminate neighborhood stories, which result in tangible products that emphasize sustainability beyond the project’s completion. These include community presentations and forum; photo collection day; oral history project; high school research project; major exhibition; neighborhood programs; lecture series and symposium; traveling exhibition; and web site. Furthermore, the initiative aims to provide an adaptable framework for approaching neighborhood history through collaborative partnership that has the potential for both national impact and replication.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Japanese American National Museum is the first museum in the United States expressly dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of America’s ethnic and cultural diversity by preserving, interpreting, and sharing the experiences of Japanese Americans. Founded in 1985 as a private, nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization, the Museum is located in the historic Little Tokyo district of downtown Los Angeles. In 1992, the Museum opened to the public its Historic Building, the former Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple built in 1925. After successfully completing a \$45-million capital campaign, the Museum opened in 1999 its 85,000-square-foot expansion Pavilion, designed by Gyo Obata of Hellmuth, Obata, and Kassabaum. Today, the Museum is recognized as the east anchor of the Los Angeles Civic Center Master Plan to revitalize downtown and has become a major cultural tourist destination site for Los Angeles.

The Japanese American National Museum has been working to become a new kind of museum—one that actively involves the people and communities it serves as equal partners in the learning process. From its inception the Museum has been, and continues to be, a community-based museum—conceived of,

strongly supported by, and deeply involved in the diverse Japanese American community. The Museum was founded on the principle that the Japanese American experience is best told from the perspective of those who lived it. With this approach, the Museum actively engages the Japanese American community in an ongoing partnership to tell this unique and diverse experience. Through a broad array of programs and exhibitions, the Museum has called upon resources both from within and external to the Japanese American network to provide opportunities for learning, understanding, and fulfilling the mission of the Museum. The Museum strongly believes that a relationship with its core community is absolutely essential to fulfilling the mission to help tell the story of Japanese Americans through first-person voices and points of view.

As a cultural history institution, the Museum has always recognized the irrevocable link between history, culture, and community. Clearly, the Japanese American community of Los Angeles exists in relationship to many other communities. The Museum, therefore, cannot operate in isolation. In order to explore fully what it means to be Japanese American in contemporary society, the Museum must probe the broader issues of ethnic and racial identity, family and home, and neighborhood and community. With its rich diversity of ethnic groups, religions, and races in Los Angeles, the Museum is continually reminded of the necessity of becoming increasingly inclusive in its definition of community.

One of the ways in which the Museum has met this challenge has been to develop a wide variety of partnerships and collaborative programs. Indeed, an assessment funded by the Institute of Museum Services in 1994 stated: “The Japanese American National Museum, while still only a relatively young institution, this reviewer regards as one of the most dynamic, innovative and well-conceived new museums he has been privileged to visit. The Museum,” he continued, “has set a model not achieved by many other institutions through actively engaging outside communities in its work; this is an exciting prospect and model which should be shared with other museums across the country.”

Since that review, the Museum has demonstrated its commitment and capacity to understand, appreciate, and celebrate the history and culture of all Americans by continuing to strengthen its relationships with community organizations and empowering the voices of multicultural experiences. The Museum has established itself as a leader in working collaboratively to develop innovative educational programming for communities. One such project that has since been used as a model for developing and maintaining community relationships was the *Finding Family Stories* Arts Partnership Project, which was supported by the James Irvine Foundation and the Nathan Cummings Foundation. Through this three-year project the Museum worked closely with local arts organizations in Los Angeles to create art exhibitions and interpretive activities and materials that were shaped through the collaborative process by the diverse perspectives of the communities in which they worked.

What made *Finding Family Stories* both unique and successful was the focus on the *process* of collaboration as much as the final products of the project. The Museum believes that it is through the actual development of an exhibition, public programs and other components that different institutions, communities, and individuals can learn most from one another. This project required that individuals from the partnering institutions both share their perspectives and learn about those of the other organizations by full participation in the conceptualization and creation of the exhibitions and various related components. Thus, it was crucial to include the partnering institutions in the actual formulation of the project components from its inception.

“Boyle Heights: Neighborhood Sites and Insights” extends the partnership model established with *Finding Family Stories* to cross disciplinary, generational, ethnic, and religious lines to examine a dynamic neighborhood that epitomizes the ongoing evolution of multicultural America. This project fits specifically into the Museum’s mission to investigate the diverse experiences of Japanese Americans within the context of the larger society. The Museum, with its state-of-the-art Pavilion, seeks more than ever to continue cultivating and nurturing relationships with community organizations, especially in strengthening museum services to youth.

OVERVIEW OF SUBJECT

The subject of this initiative is the Boyle Heights neighborhood, specifically its multiethnic history and legacy. Occupying 6 square miles of East Los Angeles, just east of Downtown and Little Tokyo, Boyle Heights is a pivotal Los Angeles neighborhood in many respects. Established in the late-1800s, it is one of the city's oldest areas, the first residential neighborhood outside of the old pueblo center. While it was initially exclusively Anglo American, by the early 1900s there were already visible residential concentrations of Jewish, Japanese, Mexican, Molokan, and African Americans. The importance of the neighborhood as a port-of-entry for immigrants from all over the world was affirmed in the varied cultural institutions that were established (ethnic churches, cemeteries, social clubs). The International Institute of Los Angeles, one of the partners of this initiative, is a social service agency established in 1914 to meet the needs of these newcomers and it continues to operate in the area today. During its early years of operation the Institute assisted, among others, Armenians fleeing persecution, Japanese picture brides, and refugees from the Mexican revolution.

By the 1930s, the neighborhood was 70% Jewish in composition, but its overall diverse composition continued to be noteworthy. In 1939, the Federal Housing Administration discouraged loans to home buyers in the neighborhood because its heterogeneity was considered a source of instability: "This is a 'melting pot' area and is literally honeycombed with diverse and subversive racial elements. It is seriously doubted whether there is a single block in the area which does not contain detrimental racial elements and there are very few districts which are not hopelessly heterogeneous."¹ In the early 1940s, the students of the neighborhood's Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School, another of the partnering organizations, reportedly had organized 32 ethnic societies.

The neighborhood's constitution was dramatically affected by World War II and its aftermath, with, among other things, the incarceration and resettlement of Japanese Americans, the beginning of the migration of Jews to other neighborhoods, and a series of major construction projects that changed its residential contours. Even so, in 1955, Ralph Friedman, a writer for the *Frontier* enthusiastically described the area as a "U.N. in Microcosm," a place where "amazing progress in human relations has been made. Working against great obstacles, the rank-and-file leadership has led a successful long-range battle for ethnic harmony which has impressed reformers grown cynical by endless defeats."²

By the 1960s, Latinos constituted the majority in the neighborhood. While the neighborhood is still primarily Latino, it also continues to be marked by diversity: recent immigrants from Mexico and Central America are affecting the social dynamics once dominated by American-born Latinos, and a number of cultural institutions in the area continue to engage Russians, Armenians, Japanese, and Jews, many of whom do not live in the area.

COMMUNITY NEEDS ADDRESSED

People who lived in Boyle Heights as far back as before World War II continue to feel strong emotional attachments to the area and invariably recount the lasting impact of growing up in an ethnically-diverse community. Many continue to meet with old friends, attend reunions, but most do not return to and participate in the neighborhood, which today struggles with such pressing problems as youth violence, deteriorating housing conditions, unemployment, and high student dropout rates. The perspectives of both former and current residents will be very instructive as a corpus; although the area has changed significantly over the years, two things have been constant since at least the Great Depression: Boyle Heights is an economically impoverished area and it is largely a community of immigrants. A number of questions with broad social implications will be raised and addressed in the course of this project.

In both public discussions and private conversations, people often evoke "the good old neighborhood" as a means of commenting on their disillusionment with contemporary community life. The stories depicting

¹ Records of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board of the Home Owners Loan Corporation, City Survey File, Los Angeles, 1939, Neighborhood D-53, national Archives, Box 74, RG 195.

² Ralph Friedman, "U.N. in Microcosm—Boyle Heights: an example of democratic process," *Frontier* (March 1955).

harmonious, safe, and inclusive communities in contrast to competitive, dangerous, and unfriendly contemporary ones do not accurately reflect the changes that have transpired or the complexity of communities. What these sorts of stories suggest is both the deliberate and unconscious denials of other types of experiences, both positive and negative. This project challenges participants and audiences to move beyond these incomplete and nostalgic "narratives of loss."³ The programs we are planning will emphasize the ongoing vitality and significance of contemporary urban life and communities. It will stimulate the recognition and more critical consideration of change as an inevitable and natural process in a community's development.

The entire Boyle Heights initiative creates opportunities for people of diverse ethnic and generational backgrounds to learn about one another's experiences and histories, recognize how these converge or diverge, and consider their lives in contexts that extend beyond their immediate neighborhood, ethnic or social groups. The hope is that such learning processes and exchanges will provide ideas and insights for better understanding the present and the changes that affect all communities. By understanding and discussing the processes of neighborhood change and continuity—the causes and consequences on people's everyday lives—we can thoughtfully contextualize and therefore more meaningfully address the neighborhood's current conditions and problems.

While the Museum focuses on the experiences of Japanese Americans, the central part of its mission is to examine the broader context of multicultural America through the history and experiences of Japanese Americans. Focusing on Boyle Heights provides a valuable opportunity for our institution to look in-depth at how Japanese American communities have interacted with other communities over a long period of time. Through a community-based approach that recognizes the unique role communities play as active interpreters of history, this multi-faceted project will facilitate opportunities for self- and community reflection, and it will help people to: 1) develop historical sensibilities; 2) sharpen their ability to locate themselves in time and place; and 3) enhance their knowledge as historically-informed makers of history.

NATIONAL IMPACT AND ADAPTABILITY

"Boyle Heights: Neighborhood Sites and Insights" seeks to increase awareness and understanding of multiethnic/racial American communities. Communities like Boyle Heights are not unusual. Rather, they represent a historical reality in American life, although they have rarely been illuminated in humanities or social science scholarship until recently. Exploring the past and present diversity of Boyle Heights across many levels (including ethnicity, nativity, language, religion, politics) and through people's different experiences and perspectives, this research will offer a complex and multidimensional representation of an urban neighborhood. What is more, given the historic and contemporary demography of the neighborhood, the research will contribute to the growing body of national inquiry that addresses race and identity not simply according to a black-white binary model.⁴

The Boyle Heights initiative takes a complex and nuanced look at the nature of ethnic and racial identity. The project will consider ethnicity not as a discrete, fixed characteristic, but rather as a situational and relational phenomenon. The project will focus on when and how interethnic comparisons emerge and the sites where intercultural exchanges occur, those which anthropologist Renato Rosaldo has referred to as "the sites of cultural production."⁵

This collaboration bridges disciplines, ethnic and generational differences, as well as the academic and public sectors. While working together to realize the complementary and shared objectives, the project partners will together contribute towards a richer understanding of the history and broader significance of

³ Margaret Crawford, "Contesting the Public Realm: Struggles over Public Space in Los Angeles." *Journal of Architectural Education* (Fall 1995).

⁴ For example, as exemplified in the writings of George Lipsitz and Michael M.J. Fischer. Also notable is Leland Saito's recently published book, *Race and Politics: Asian Americans, Latinos, and Whites in a Los Angeles Suburb* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), which looks at multiracial interaction in political, economic, and cultural dimensions.

⁵ Renato Rosaldo, *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989).

this Los Angeles neighborhood. As such, this project provides an important model for collaborative multiethnic and multidisciplinary approaches to researching and interpreting the experiences and histories of urban communities.

This project has both local and national significance and appeal. Boyle Heights is compelling and instructive as a site of exploration not only because of its significance in context of Los Angeles' history but also for the perspectives it can offer for understanding processes that affect other urban areas in the United States. The project acknowledges that neighborhood life and social interactions are integrally related to events, movements, and policies that emerge out of the broader contexts of the city, state, country, even the world. The changing physical contours, social organization, and demography of Boyle Heights resulted from government policies and actions that have similarly affected other urban communities in the United States. These include racially-restrictive housing covenants, changes in immigration policies, redlining, residential displacement as a consequence of freeway construction, and urban renewal. The project, therefore, explores not only the internal dynamics of neighborhood life, but also considers the larger forces that have affected and shaped community composition and social relationships, and offers important insights into the processes of interethnic cooperation and conflict.

Through public programs and the exhibition, the project encourages people to make connections between Boyle Heights and the dynamics of the communities with which they identify. Through the stories transmitted and the way these are interpreted, the project outcomes, especially the exhibition, will have resonance for audiences in other parts of the United States. As such, the Museum plans to travel the exhibition to other institutions across the country.

The Boyle Height project was designed to serve as a model for the collaborative research and documentation of community histories and experiences. The project and its programs are instructive for museums that want to work in partnership with the communities they serve and with other organizations. We will work closely with project advisors and partners to develop interpretive strategies and educational materials that will enable people to draw connections between their lives and the content of our programs by emphasizing familiar and accessible themes. Additionally, this project uses research techniques and presentational formats that can be adapted by people from other parts of the country to explore their own communities.

PROJECT GOALS

In collaboratively exploring and interpreting the history of Boyle Heights in a museum exhibition and related public programs, the goals of the project are to:

- actively initiate collaborations and intercultural exchanges between organizations, scholars, and community members;
- document, interpret, and share the history of the diverse communities in Boyle Heights through the voices and perspectives of those who live/d there;
- facilitate understanding of and appreciation for the history of this neighborhood through exhibitions and public programs;
- increase awareness about how the histories of people from different ethnic backgrounds are related in direct and indirect ways;
- engage and challenge a broad spectrum of individuals and organizations to participate in a civic dialogue that connects the stories of past and present neighborhood residents, as well as those of people from different ethnic/racial backgrounds.

PROJECT DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The overall project has several components: community presentations/forums, an oral history project, a photo collection day, neighborhood programs, symposium/lectures series, and an exhibition with accompanying educational programming, and web site. Each component encourages participants to consider the connections between individuals and communities of different ethnic/racial backgrounds in

Boyle Heights, and the ways in which the neighborhood's history, transformations, and contemporary issues are related to broader historic, social, cultural, and political trends and events.

This initiative establishes a lucid approach to accomplish its ambitious goals and objectives. Each component is intended as an independent program that builds upon the other components to ultimately formulate the project as a whole. The carefully outlined plan allows staff to assure the success of the project and for partnerships to develop over a period of time and that we expect to be sustained beyond the completion of the project.

The Museum has a long history of successfully completing complex projects that are innovative and ambitious. Past experience with successful projects like *Finding Family Stories* demonstrates the ability of the Museum in executing the objectives of multi-component projects in collaboration with partners. The Museum upholds effective management of resources to maintain its standard of high-quality programming. For the "Boyle Heights" project, we have already begun forming project teams among the advisors and partner staff for the planning and implementation of each separate component. This will enable us to efficiently and simultaneously move forward on several projects.

Summary of work to date

Over the past six months, the Museum has laid the groundwork for the research phase of the project. Project staff has: 1) assembled and had three intensive planning meetings with our team of key organizations and scholars in addition to a number of smaller working meetings with subcommittees of the partnering organizations and scholars; 2) recruited key research associates/interviewers who will conduct oral history interviews; 3) successfully raised funds from the California Council for the Humanities and The John Randolph Haynes and Dora Haynes Foundation to support oral history interviewing, photograph collecting, a radio documentary series, and a portion of the Roosevelt Senior High School student project; 4) begun to conduct an exhaustive survey of existing materials related to Boyle Heights; and 5) conceptualized the preliminary research design of the project and its formats.

Project Components

1) Community Presentations and Forum (January 2000-May 2000)

To mobilize broad community involvement in defining and implementing this project, we will give community presentations and co-host a community forum with the Jewish Historical Society of Southern California. Between January and April 2000, we will conduct brief 15- to 20-minute presentations at community functions (senior center lunches, church meetings, board meetings, reunions, etc.) to inform audiences of project objectives and components. At these presentations, we will invite members of the audience to attend a community forum scheduled for May 21, 2000. The purpose of the forum is to generate dialogue about the project themes/issues, components, and objectives among a large group of people representing different types of experiences in Boyle Heights. In these forums, the participants will divide into small groups to discuss historic and contemporary neighborhood issues and concerns.

2) Photo Collection Day (April 29, 30, 2000)

Collecting visual representations of Boyle Heights is an integral component of this project. We are inviting people to share their family albums and stories. This photo collection day, held at Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School, will serve not only as a means of documenting the past, but will also provide the opportunity for intercultural and intergenerational interactions between former and current residents. The project goal is to copy approximately 250 photographs representing the diverse family histories of the people who have lived in the area. The event will be modeled after the Los Angeles Public Library's successful "Shades of L.A." project. Copy negatives will be stored at the Japanese American National Museum. Enlargements of a selection of the images copied will also be distributed to the the International Institute.

3) Oral History Interviews (June 2000-January 2001)

A primary component of the project will focus on documenting the history of the neighborhood by recording the voices of past and present residents. By drawing upon the power of personal testimony,

these interviews will capture the "unofficial" narratives of community life and reveal dimensions of Boyle Heights that are not often represented in "official" accounts of the neighborhood (e.g., in public policy plans and news media reports).

The Japanese American National Museum staff and the humanities scholars will provide oral history workshops that provide the models and skills that individuals and organizations can adapt and use to continue documenting their own histories. Additionally, a total of 30 oral history interviews will be conducted by team or research associates. The interviews will focus on documenting stories about how the development and experiences of the neighborhood's different ethnic/racial groups intersected on a day-to-day basis and in response to major historical events or movements. The Japanese American National Museum will transcribe and duplicate all of the interview materials. Partners will retain copies of these materials; original materials will be deposited into the museum's National Resource Center, where they will be accessible to the public.

4) Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School Student Research Project (September 2000-June 2001)
Beginning in Fall 2000, we will collaborate with the Humanitas Academy at Roosevelt High School to explore the history of Boyle Heights and to compare and contrast contemporary student and teen life with that of previous decades. We will provide students with training in oral history interviewing and other research methodologies through workshops and presentations by scholars with specialized knowledge in oral history, architecture and urban planning, and exhibition design. The final presentational format for the students' research has not yet been determined. The teacher, Susan Anderson, has indicated that she prefers to develop the specifics of the class according to the dynamics and interests of the students who are enrolled. We are considering the compilation of the research onto a web site that previous students have already started or creating a free-standing exhibition that can be displayed at various community sites, including the partner organizations, branch libraries, etc. The student research and materials may also be incorporated into the museum's exhibition (described below).

5) Exhibition (Fall 2001 – Spring 2002)

Through artifacts, photographs, original artwork, media components, and interactive environments, the Boyle Heights exhibition will present a complex interpretation of community life that highlights interethnic relations and exchanges. The exhibition will emphasize first-person perspectives of former and current residents of the neighborhood, and it will demonstrate the unique characteristics of Boyle Heights as well as its broader significance.

- **Exhibition Catalogue** – The conceptualization for the exhibition catalogue is part of the collaborative planning, but we expect it will include a historical narrative, essays, photographs, oral history excerpts, and artistic interpretations that capture the spirit of the neighborhood. The publication will be modest in scale and price to provide access to a general public, rather than scholarly audience, and it will provide its readers with a fascinating look at this multicultural community.
- **Educational Materials/Components** – Education materials will provide interpretation and access to the Museum's wide-range of audiences and constituencies. The materials developed in partnership with our collaborators and the Museum's education department will include a Family Guide and an exhibition brochure. All printed materials will be translated and available in three languages: English, Spanish, and Japanese.

6) Neighborhood Programs (Summer 2001 – Fall 2001)

As a means of connecting the project to the "real neighborhood," which lies just across the 1st Street bridge near the museum, we will plan a series of Neighborhood Programs that encourage our audience to visit and walk the physical landscape.

- **Public Tour of Evergreen Memorial Park** - This program will explore the history and transformation of Boyle Heights through a tour of Evergreen Memorial Park. This cemetery, one of the city's oldest, is significant as a neighborhood site because it maintains a connection with

people who do not/no longer live in Boyle Heights but continue to return to the cemetery to commemorate loved ones on anniversaries. The landscape of the cemetery—the gravemarkers, monuments, and the way these are organized—will provide the visual device for discussing the social and cultural history and diversity of the neighborhood. In addition, we will explore the different traditions associated with the commemoration of the dead. This program will coincide with Self-Help Graphics' annual celebration of *Día de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead).

- **Neighborhood Displays and Workshops** - As a means of extending the exhibition into sites of the neighborhood, we will hold two workshops to engage Boyle Heights residents in the exhibition process by teaching them how to preserve, document, and publicly interpret their histories and experiences. The displays and exhibitions created independently will be installed concurrently with the exhibition's run at the museum. These might range from front-yard displays, community center exhibitions, to storefront installations. An illustrated map, with photographs and oral history interviews, will be produced to guide visitors through the neighborhood and to all of the participating sites.

7) Lecture Series and Symposium (Fall 2001-Spring 2002)

A series of lectures and panel discussions will provide a forum for in-depth explorations on the history and issues of different Los Angeles neighborhoods, as well as of different types of multicultural communities from throughout the United States, both rural and urban. Scholars, students, and community members will present their research.

8) Traveling Exhibition (tbd)

The exhibition will address not only the internal dynamics of neighborhood life, but also demonstrate how the neighborhood is a part of and shaped by larger processes and events that affect other communities around the country. As such, we expect it to have resonance for audiences beyond the immediate Southern California region. The Museum plans to travel this exhibition, or a traveling version of the show, to appropriate venues across the United States.

9) Web site (Summer 2001)

As a means of centralizing information about the neighborhood and its resources, we will collaborate with scholars and advisors in creating a web site. The site will include an online exhibition (adapted from the museum's exhibition) as well as a directory of resources, services, collections, and research related to the neighborhood.

Dissemination

With most of its major exhibitions, the Museum produces a variety of products that effectively extend the messages of the major exhibitions, such as film/video presentations, publications, and traveling exhibitions. The media arts components, created by the Museum's Media Arts Center, and the exhibition catalogue, are made available to the public and for educational purposes. The development of a traveling exhibition and web site will ensure that the project reaches a broad audience, including people outside of the Southern California area.

Specific contributions

This project will bring people together to discuss their experiences and perspectives. It will also provide research techniques and presentational models that people can adapt as they continue to explore and address their lives in context of the city, the state, and the world. In these ways, the project programs teach tolerance of difference by suggesting that people's lives are not tightly delimited by the geographic parameters of neighborhoods or their particular ethnic or racial backgrounds, but rather integrally related to and similar in many ways to those of others who may differ from them in terms of generation, ethnic/racial background, or place of residence.

As the project works together with past and present Boyle Heights residents in the interpretation and presentation of their histories and experiences, it will reinforce a sense of pride and personal investment in both the project programs and in the neighborhood itself. This collaboration will be instructive for all participants and partners in that it will help us to better understand relationship and responsibilities to Boyle Heights, and get a better sense of the neighborhood's connection to broader historical, social, cultural, and political contexts. Such a process is a potentially effective way of investing and engaging people in their neighborhoods and communities, and consequently fundamental to strengthening community life and people's willingness and ability to affect change at the personal and collective levels.

Finally, through the collection and documentation of primary materials, such as photographs, artifacts, and oral histories, and in the virtual absence of materials that document in-depth the specific incidents and contexts for multiethnic interaction, this project will also expand the base of historic resources available to future researchers. All materials collected as part of this project will be available to the public through the Museum's National Resource Center. Copies of a selection of photographs and bound transcripts of all the oral history interviews will also be deposited into other local collections, including those of the partner organizations, and libraries.

Previous and existing programs and research on Boyle Heights

This project complements and builds upon a number of significant projects specifically addressing the history of Boyle Heights. The Jewish Historical Society of Southern California, one of the project partners, has previously collected oral histories and photographs from former residents. In 1996, they produced with director Ellie Kahn a documentary video, "Meet Me at Brooklyn and Soto," which recounts the Jewish history of the area. Currently, the historical society is working with neighborhood organizations to restore an old orthodox synagogue into a cultural center that highlights the Los Angeles Jewish experience but also considers and addresses contemporary neighborhood life. Judy Branfman, an artist, writer and project scholarly advisor, is in the process of producing a video documentary and book about Jewish labor history in the neighborhood. Since the early 1980s, the students from a local high school, Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School, have conducted research on the neighborhood's history under the leadership of teachers such as Howard Shorr and Susan Anderson, both project advisors. In 1997, Roosevelt students collaborated with the Getty Research Institute, urban planners, and a local library to explore the neighborhood from their personal perspectives with consideration for the history of the area.⁶ Historian George Sanchez, project scholarly advisor, is currently researching a forthcoming book, *Remaking Community: A Multiracial History of the Boyle Heights Neighborhood of Los Angeles, California*.

EVALUATION

Evaluations of the initiative measure the results of the project against the established goals. All of the partners will complete final reports that review the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership. Quantitative measures include: reports (interim and final reports); number of audience served; and ability to meeting timeline and budget projections. Qualitative measures include: partners and audiences comments; partners and audience surveys; volunteer and community feedback; published articles and press notices; and the degree and kind of participation, involvement, and collaborations of partners and community groups. Evaluation results have an immediate impact, allowing the museum to implement changes during the course of the project. After the fact, evaluation helps guide planning for future programming. Finally, the partners will convene to reflect on their experiences and discuss plans for continuing collaborations. We will build on this project by sustaining certain projects and developing new ones. Our ability to accomplish these objectives will be strong indicators of the success and effectiveness of our outreach and partnerships, and our ability to create programs that are meaningful to a broad audience.

⁶ See the following web pages for examples of student work: www.getty.edu/gri/public/llk/research and www.lalc.k12.ca.us/access/upper.html. The Local Libraries, Local Knowledge project is part of a city-wide initiative that engages young people in representing neighborhood experiences in narrative and visual forms.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

Japanese American National Museum key staff

Sojin Kim, Ph.D., is associate curator at the Museum. She received her doctorate in folklore from UCLA, and has taught classes in folklore, anthropology, and Asian American studies. Prior to coming to the Museum, she worked in the Folk and Traditional Arts program of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs and as project coordinator for *Shades of L.A.*—a community photo history project that operated out of the Los Angeles Public Library. She also served as a consultant for the state-wide extension, *Shades of California*, which was administered by the California State Library. As co-project director, she will oversee all operational aspects of this project, including partnership development, research, collections, and the conceptualization of exhibition content and script.

Darcie Iki is the Museum's curator of life history. She manages community oral history projects and works to incorporate oral history into Museum activities, including exhibitions, public programs, and collections. She received an M.A. in Asian American studies from UCLA, and she is currently on the executive committee of the Southwest Oral History Association. As co-project director, she will oversee all aspects of this project, including partnership development, research, collections, and the conceptualization of exhibition content and script. She will also play a leading role in the coordination of oral history interviewing and the development of the audio installations.

Claudia Sobral is the Museum's assistant director of education. Much of her work involves initiating and sustaining collaborative projects with other community organizations. She was the manager of the Museum's three-year arts partnership *Finding Family Stories*, as well as the project coordinator for a student media project at Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School. She holds a B.A. in anthropology from Bard College and studied in the Leadership in Museum Education program at Bank Street College in New York. As the project's education and partnership specialist, she will work closely with partnering organizations, focusing on the development of public programs, educational materials, and the exhibition's arts components.

Partner organization key staff

Susan G. Anderson is the social studies department chair of Roosevelt High School in Boyle Heights and adjunct faculty in the Teacher Education Program at Claremont Graduate School. She and her students have collaborated with a number of institutions in class projects about Boyle Heights, including the Getty Research Institute and the Community Library Information Collaborative. She and her students will be working with us during the academic year that begins in September 2000 and ends in June 2001.

Tomas Benitez is a writer and the director of Self-Help Graphics, a community-based visual arts center in East Los Angeles. He is also the president of the Los Angeles County Arts Commission and sits on numerous arts and cultural policy committees. He will be involved in the conceptualization of the exhibition's arts components as well as the Evergreen Memorial Park tour. Drawing upon his extensive personal and professional experiences with Eastside communities, he will contribute to public outreach efforts, provide advice during exhibition script development, and participate in the conceptualization of the neighborhood programs.

Pat Gomez is an installation artist and assistant director of Self-Help Graphics. She is also president of the board of directors for the NewTown Pasadena Foundation, which does site-specific installations and performances. Previously, she chaired the board of directors for the Foundation for Art Resources (FAR). Her experience as an artist, curator, and arts administrator, and her experience coordinating large-scale public arts programs will be a valuable asset to our public programs planning and implementation, as well as to the development of the exhibition's arts components.

Stephen Sass is an attorney for NBC and the president of the Jewish Historical Society of Southern California. Under his leadership, the Historical Society has taken on a number of ambitious projects including the restoration of a historic orthodox synagogue in Boyle Heights, the Breed Street Shul. Given the Society's ties to the older Jewish communities of the city, he will be an invaluable resource for this

project. We are collaborating with the Society in the planning and implementation of the community forum and in outreach for other project programs.

Stephen Voss is president and CEO of the International Institute of Los Angeles. He has been directing the organization's operations since 1994 expanding its services to new populations and forging collaborations with other agencies. His organization's links to a diverse range of constituents, including both former and contemporary neighborhood residents will be an enormous asset to this project, facilitating outreach during all stages. Mr. Voss will be working with us on programs and workshops that occur at the Institute's Boyle Heights site. We are already planning a modest photo display, which will be installed onsite next spring.

SUSTAINABILITY

The “Boyle Heights: Neighborhood Sites and Insights” initiative is an innovative collaboration between the Japanese American National Museum and a multidisciplinary partnership of community organizations in the Boyle Heights neighborhood. Through multifaceted formats and meaningful long-term relationships, the project will explore the history and transformation of an important Los Angeles neighborhood through the perspective of the local residents—past and present.

A central part of this initiative is the development of sustainable partnerships. We hope that the efforts started in the Boyle Heights project collaboration will continue to live in the activities of all the partnering organizations, who may continue with the project outcomes themselves or adapt aspects of them for use in their future public programs. Above all, we hope that the partnership experience will promote lasting intercultural relations and linkages between participating organizations and communities. We expect that by working together, the partners will reinforce each other's involvement in Boyle Heights and that the expertise and information shared will continue to inform how each develops their respective programs and projects and to work with other communities in the future.

Project outcomes will include documented research, oral history transcripts, publications, and traveling exhibitions that will assure that the benefits of the project continue well beyond the grant period. The Museum is committed to taking the project nationally to serve its constituents and the general public to promote the understanding and appreciation of America's ethnic and cultural diversity. Above all, this project builds upon partnerships we have established in earlier programs, and therefore clearly demonstrates our commitment to sustaining meaningful relationships with other organizations and their audiences.

**IMLS National Leadership Grant
from Museums Program**

**SECTION 1: Budget Detail
Year 1: July 2000 - June 2001**

<u>item</u>	<u>computation</u>	<u>Dissemination IMLS</u>	<u>IMLS</u>	<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Third Party</u>	<u>Total</u>
SALARIES & WAGES (Permanent staff)						
	12 months x 60% time	1000	5,000	13,800		19,800
	12 months x 60% time	1000	5,000	16,200		22,200
	6 months x 20% time			4,500		4,500
	12 months x 20% time			7,800		7,800
	6 months x 15% time			4,500		4,500
	9 months x 5% time			2,100		2,100
	6 months x 10% time			6,563		6,563
	9 months x 10% time			2,925		2,925
	12 months x 10% time			3,000		3,000
	9 months x 15% time			4,275		4,275
	ager	2000				2,000
	Subtotal Salaries & Wages	4,000	10,000	65,663	0	79,663
FRINGE BENEFITS	22% x salaries			17,526		
CONSULTANT FEES						
Partnership/Educational Components						
Partnering Organizations	4 stipends @ \$1000		4,000			4,000
Neighborhood Programs - advisors	5 advisors @ \$500/stipend		2,500			2,500
Community workshop leaders	2 workshops @ \$500 x 2 people		2,000			2,000
Roosevelt High Project consultants	2 consultants @ \$500		1,000		2,500	3,500
Web Design & research	50-page web site @ \$100/page		5,000			5,000
Project documentation - videographer	3 days @ \$250/day	750				750
Project documentation - photographer	5 days @ \$100		500			500
Research/Oral History						
Scholars/Community Advisors	12 scholars/advisors @ \$1000				12,000	12,000
Research Assistant	Stipend for 6 months				3,000	3,000
Oral History Interviewers	5 interviewers @ \$2500/interviewer				12,500	12,500
Videographers - for interviewers	30 interviews @ \$250/day				7,500	7,500
Transcriptionist	30 interviews (2-3 hour) @\$250/interview				3,600	3,600
Indexing for Oral History Publication	30 interviews @ \$200/ea.				6,000	6,000
Writers for Oral History Publication	3 essays @ \$250				750	750
Publication - A Guide to Documenting Community History						
Writer/Editor		2500				2,500
Designer		1500				1,500
Exhibition						
Exhibition Designer	Preliminary Design (including graphic design)			45,000		45,000
Translators	Japanese, Spanish		5,000			5,000
Graphic Designer	Brochure/Family Guide/Printed materials		3,000			3,000
Illustrator	Map of Boyle Heights		1,000			1,000
Media Installation						
Film & Sound Crew	3 people @ \$250/day x 10 days			7,500		7,500
Production Assistant	\$10/hour x 80 hours/mo. x 6 months			5,000		5,000
Editor	1 editor @ \$25/hr x 300 hours			7,500		7,500
Post Production/Special Effects	\$25/hr x 100 hours			2,500		2,500
Exhibition Catalogue						
Graphic Designer				8,000		8,000
Editor				5,000		5,000
Essayist Fees				5,000		5,000
Photographer				2,000		2,000
	Subtotal Consultant Fees	4,750	24,000	87,500	47,850	164,100
TRAVEL						
IMLS Meeting - transportation & lodging	All partners		6,000			
Consultant Travel - Scholar/partner mtg.	4 scholars for a 3 day meeting					
Transportation Costs -national scholar	4 scholars @ \$400/trip			1,600		1,600
Lodging/per diem -national scholars	4 scholars @ \$150/night x 2 nights			1,200		1,200

**IMLS National Leadership Grant
from Museums Program**

**SECTION 1: Budget Detail
Year 1: July 2000 - June 2001**

Transportation Costs -San Diego	2 scholars @ \$100/trip		200		200
Lodging/Per Diem-San Diego	2 scholars @ \$150/night x 2 nights		600		600
Staff travel to potential travelling venues					
Transportation Costs	1 person x 2 trips @ \$400		800		800
Lodging & Per Diem	1 person x 2trips @ \$150/night x 2 nights		600		600
Travel for research & development, including media productions					
Transportation Costs	2 trips x 2 people @ \$400		1,600		1,600
Lodging & Per Diem	2 trips x 2 people @ \$150/night x 2 nights		1,200		1,200
Travel for the AAM Conference- 4 people	registration fees x 4 people @ \$175 day	525	175		700
Transportation Costs	1 trip x 3 people @ \$600/trip	1800	600		2,400
Lodging & Per Diem	3 person @ \$130/night x 2 nights	780	260		1,040

Subtotal Travel	3,105	6,000	8,835	0	17,940
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MATERIALS, SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT

Partnership/Educational Components

Roosevelt High Project	audio tapes, batteries, supplies, research materials		1,000		1,000	2,000
	production materials		1,000		1,000	2,000
	Family guide, brochure, interpretive educ components		2,000			2,000
Educational Materials - R&D						
Educational Program Supplies				750		750
Workshop and Training Supplies				500		500
Project Documentation - film	20 rolls x \$6	120				120
Project Documentation - videotape	15 videotapes @ \$15/tape	225				225

Publication - Documenting Community History

Office supplies		100				100
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Research/Oral History

Film & Video Supplies	digital video tape, audio tapes, etc.			1,800		1,800
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Exhibition

Archival Supplies				2,000		2,000
Packing/Wrapping Materials				200		200
Media - Equipment Rental				1,500		1,500

Subtotal Supplies and Materials	445	4,000	6,750	2,000	13,195
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SERVICES

Partnership/Educational Components

Web site- digitizing services	200 images @ \$15/per image		3,000			3,000
Project Documentation - film process	20 rolls @ \$15	300				300

Publication - Documenting Community History

Printing/Binding	600 copies @ \$4/book	2400				2,400
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Exhibition

Photographic Processing - Exhibition	exhibition, catalog, brochure, family guide		2,000	2,000		4,000
Usage Fees				5,000		5,000
Media - Acquisition Rights, Licensing				3,000		3,000
Media - video duplications	100 mini-dv to VHS @ \$30				3,000	3,000

Subtotal Services	2,700	5,000	10,000	3,000	20,700
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OTHER

Partners Meetings	supplies, photocopying, resources, etc.			1,500		1,500
Meeting room rental				1,500		1,500
Partnering Organization expenses	4 partnering organizations @ \$750		3,000			3,000
Copyright Registration-Catalogue				500		500
Postage				500		500
Delivery (Fed Ex, DHL, UPS)				200		200
Messenger (Sunrise)				200		200

Subtotal Other Costs	0	3,000	4,400	0	7,400
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TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	15,000	52,000	200,674	52,850	320,524
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TOTAL INDIRECT COST			32,052		32,052
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Applicant chooses to use Rate A-10%

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	15,000	52,000	232,726	52,850	352,576
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Institute of Museum and Library Services

National Leadership Grant 2000/Museums in the Community

Dissemination Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Japanese American National Museum respectfully submits this dissemination plan for our project "Boyle Heights: Neighborhood Sites and Insights," a multifaceted and dynamic partnership initiative and collaborative exhibition that explores the history and transformations of a significant Los Angeles neighborhood.

The Japanese American National Museum has been working to become a new kind of museum--One that actively involves the people and communities it serves as equal partners. From its inception the Museum has been, and continues to be community-based--conceived of, strongly supported by, and deeply involved in the diverse Japanese American community. "Boyle Heights: Neighborhood Sites and Insights" extends the partnership model across disciplinary, generational, ethnic, and religious lines. The International Institute of Los Angeles, The Jewish Historical Society of Southern California, Self-Help Graphics, Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School and an advisory group of scholars, community experts, and the Japanese American National Museum are actively collaborating to produce a community-based and interdisciplinary initiative that encompasses new research, an exhibition, and an extensive series of public programs.

In addition to our general publicity plan and our community forums and workshops, we endeavor to share our experiences and insights into the process of community collaboration with other museum and public history institutions through the strategies outlined below. They include:

1. Presentations at professional conferences
2. Web site
3. Publications

The new expenses that will be incurred by these strategies include (see attached budget detail):

- Conference travel, per diem, and registration
- Consultant fees for compilation and implementation of Web site and publication
- Production costs for Web site and publication
- Project documentation (for use in conference presentations, Web site, and publication)

1. PRESENTATIONS AT PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES

We plan to share our experiences and insights with other professionals at a number of conferences. These will include meetings of museum professionals (Association of American Museums), historic preservationists (National Trust for Historic Preservation), historians (American Studies Association, Association of Asian American Studies, American Association for State and Local History), folklorists (American Folklore Society), and oral historians (Oral History Association, Southwestern Oral History Association). Participation in these conferences will occur over a two-to-three-year period. The conferences that we are currently planning on attending during this grant cycle are:

National Trust for Historic Preservation, "Saving America's Treasures in the 21st Century,"

October 30- November 5, 2000, Los Angeles, California

Our participation in this conference is confirmed. We were invited to discuss how community oral history projects can contribute to historic preservation efforts. We welcome this opportunity to engage in a dialogue with architects, planners, and preservationists about the importance of community partnerships and of involving community voices and experiences in the planning and preservation processes. This will enable us to share the objectives and priorities of our project with an audience that plays an important role in the future development of urban communities.

American Association of Museums , "The Spirit of Community," May 6-10,2001 ,

St. Louis, Missouri

We are submitting a proposal for a panel presentation (due June 30). The panel will address the process of collaboration that underlies our Boyle Heights project. Museum project staff (Darcie Iki or Sojin Kim) will chair the panel. Panel presenters will tentatively include a representative from IMLS, a representative from the Japanese American National Museum (Darcie Iki or Sojin Kim), George Sanchez (USC professor, project advisor, oral history interviewer), and a representative from the Jewish Historical Society of Southern California (project partner). Presentations will include slide and video examples from community programs, such as community forums, photo duplication days, and a high school student research component.

2. WEB SITE

As a means of centralizing information about the neighborhood, its resources, and the project processes, we will collaborate with scholars and advisors to create a Web site. The site will include an online exhibition; this will feature photographs from our public programs; as well as a selection of images copied from community members during our photo duplication events, excerpts from oral history interviews, and a directory of resources, services, collections, and research related to the neighborhood. The site will also make available the community history documentation procedures provided in the guidebook described below.

3. PUBLICATIONS

Through another granting source, the California Council for the Humanities (CCH), our project is being evaluated for how it meets CCH's mission to strengthen community. The consultants, Harder + Company (San Francisco), who have been contracted to do this are working with us to develop evaluation tools and procedures. In addition, they will also be conducting focus groups with our project participants and partners. Ultimately, they will provide a report on their evaluation results (by March 2001). This will give us important insights into the successes and challenges of our programs and processes, and these will be incorporated into the publications we generate about our project.

Guidebook. We will produce a 100-page guide to documenting community history. This publication will:

- describe the objectives of and processes involved in our Boyle Heights partnership initiative;
- provide detailed instructions for developing and implementing community documentation and collaborations through oral history interviewing and photo duplication projects.

The instructions for oral history and photo duplication programs will use as examples the experiences from our Boyle Heights project. In addition to a description of documentation procedures and techniques, suggested planning and implementation schedules, recommended equipment lists, and a resource bibliography, the guide will also provide sample materials produced for and yielded from the project, including release forms, contracts, and transcribed oral history interviews. It will also include photographs from our various programs, such as community forums, photo duplication days, and oral history interview sessions. (See attachments: Photo Duplication Day Training Workbook; REgenerations Oral History project essay)

The guidebook will be printed in a run of 600. We will distribute the guide to interested organizations and individuals through our Web site and as supplementary materials at conference presentations. We will also disseminate information about the availability of the guide via newsletters of project partners and organizations that serve museums, libraries, and historical societies (e.g., *Aviso*, Museum-L, Association of American Museums, California Association of Museums, Oral History Association, American Library Association).

Essays/articles. The following publications will not be developed until after the conclusion of the IMLS National Leadership granting cycle. As such, we are not requesting additional funding for these. Museum project staff (Darcie Iki, Sojin Kim, Claudia Sobral) will be critically evaluating the project's processes as they pertain to museum practices and oral history methodology, community history, and youth programming. These evaluations as well as descriptions of the project processes and methodologies will be presented in essays and short articles for professional journals and newsletters. These may include *Museum News*, *The Oral History Review*, *American Quarterly*. Additionally, in the exhibition catalog we will include an essay describing how the project and partnerships were developed.

CONCLUSION

The strategies described above will enable the Japanese American National Museum to share our experiences with organizations and individuals. We hope that our efforts will suggest to others how to support cooperative relations among diverse ethnic/racial groups and serve as a model for the collaborative documentation, interpretation, and presentation of a community's history and experiences.

With our partners and advisors, who represent academic and public sectors, humanities and social sciences/services orientations, we are working together to realize complementary and shared objectives. In the process, we are establishing and reinforcing intercultural, interdisciplinary, and institutional linkages that will have a lasting impact upon how each of us works with communities in the future.